

**CLAIMS**

1. An elongate batten adapted for positioning intermediate an inner wall framing member and an outer wall cladding sheet to facilitate dispersion and evaporation of moisture from a wall cavity, said batten including at least one channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture between the batten and the framing member.
2. A batten according to claim 1, wherein the channel is formed in an inner surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with an adjacent outer surface of the underlying framing member.
3. A batten according to claim 1, wherein the channel is formed in an outer surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with an adjacent inner surface of the overlying cladding sheet.
4. A batten according to claim 1, wherein the channel extends through the batten.
5. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the channel extends longitudinally to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture along the length of the batten.
6. A batten according to claim 5, including a plurality of said longitudinal channels disposed in generally parallel side-by-side relationship and extending along substantially the entire length of the batten.
7. A batten according to claim 6, wherein the longitudinal channels are respectively formed between adjacent pairs of a corresponding plurality of longitudinal ridges, said ridges collectively defining the inner surface of the batten.
8. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said at least one channel includes a generally transverse channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture across the batten.
9. A batten according to claim 8, wherein said transverse channel is formed in the inner surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with the adjacent outer surface of the framing member.
10. A batten according to claim 8, wherein the transverse channel is formed in an outer surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with an adjacent inner surface of the overlying cladding sheet.
11. A batten according to claim 8, wherein the transverse channel extends through the batten.

12. A batten according to any one of claims 8 to 11, including a plurality of said transverse channels disposed in generally parallel side-by-side relationship.
13. A batten according to claim 12 when dependent upon claim 7, wherein the transverse channels are defined by a corresponding series of openings formed in the  
5 respective longitudinal ridges.
14. A batten according to claim 13, wherein the openings defining the respective transverse channels are transversely aligned.
15. A batten according to claim 13, wherein the openings defining the respective transverse channels are transversely staggered.
- 10 16. A batten according to any one of claims 12 to 15 when dependent upon claim 6 or claim 7, wherein the transverse and longitudinal channels form a ventilation and drainage matrix adapted to permit migration of moisture in liquid or vapour form across, along and through the batten.
17. A batten according to claim 16, wherein the longitudinal and transverse  
15 channels are disposed in generally orthogonal relationship.
18. A batten according to claim 16 or claim 17, wherein at least some of the transverse and longitudinal channels respectively intersect.
19. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being formed from a plastics material adapted to resist moisture permeation, and adapted to be readily cut  
20 to desired lengths using conventional sawing tools.
20. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, incorporating pre-formed lines of weakness disposed at predetermined intervals, to permit the batten to be manually divided into small sections of desired length, without the need for cutting or sawing.
- 25 21. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being formed substantially from PVC.
22. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being formed substantially from FRC.
23. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being between 30 and  
30 around 60mm in width.
24. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being approximately 45mm in width.

25. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being between 10mm and around 30mm in thickness.
26. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, being approximately 19 mm in thickness.
- 5 27. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, including three longitudinal channels, each being approximately 9.5 mm in width and approximately 17 mm in height, defined by respective intermediate ridges being approximately 2.5 mm in thickness.
28. A batten according to claim 27, wherein the transverse channels are defined by  
10 a series of cutouts in the ridges, each cutout being generally U-shaped with a length of around 20mm and a height of around 8mm, the cutouts being spaced apart along the respective ridges with approximately 50mm between centers.
29. A batten according to claim 28, wherein corresponding cutouts on adjacent ridges are staggered.
- 15 30. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, having any preformed length of around 2400mm, and being adapted for division into smaller predetermined lengths on-site.
31. A batten according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the outer surface is grooved, to facilitate the downward passage past the batten of water passing  
20 along the inner surface of the outer cladding material.
32. A method of building construction, said method comprising the steps of:-  
forming a structural frame from framing members, such that the framing members define cavities therebetween;  
securing a plurality of battens as defined in any one of the preceding claims to  
25 outer surfaces of at least some of the framing members;  
applying an outer cladding material to substantially cover the framing members and the battens; such that the battens collectively form a clearance space between the framing members and the cladding material;  
the battens thereby facilitating drainage and ventilation of the cavities.
- 30 33. A method according to claim 32, wherein the structural frame is formed substantially from a material selected from the group comprising timber, metal, FRC

and plastics, and wherein the method is employed to construct a wall section of a building.

34. A method according to claim 32 or claim 33, wherein the cladding material is FRC sheet.

5 35. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 34, wherein the battens are secured so as collectively to cover more than approximately 50% of the combined outer surface area of the framing members to which the method is applied.

36. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 35, wherein the battens are secured to the framing members by a fastening technique selected from the group  
10 comprising nailing, screwing, tacking, stapling, gluing, welding, chemical bonding, frictional engagement, and mechanical engagement.

37. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 36, including the further step of applying an internal lining material such that the framing members are effectively sandwiched, directly or indirectly, between the external cladding material and the  
15 internal lining material.

38. A method according to claim 37, wherein the internal lining material is plasterboard.

39. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 38, including the step of pre-attaching the battens to the cladding sheets to form a batten and cladding sub-  
20 assembly, and subsequently securing the sub-assembly to the frame.

40. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 39, including the step of forming the channels in the batten by a process selected from the group comprising: extruding; machining; milling; routing; casting; moulding; and fabricating; or a combination of those processes.

25 41. A building or building section, constructed in accordance with the method as defined in any one of claims 32 to 40, using battens as defined in any one of claims 1 to 31.